

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communication apparatus that communicates with a remote center to receive data from the remote center, the communication apparatus comprising:
  - a master unit that receives the data from the remote center;
  - a plurality of slave units that receive the data from the remote center, via the master unit; and
  - a control circuit that controls the master unit and the plurality of slave units, wherein when one of the master unit and the plurality of slave units makes a request to the remote center for transmitting the data, only the one that makes the request is allowed to receive and store therein the data transmitted from the remote center.
2. The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when the master unit makes the request, the control circuit allows only the master unit to receive the data transmitted from the remote center and store therein the data, and when one of the plurality of slave units makes the request, the control circuit allows only the one of the plurality of slave units to receive the data transmitted from the remote center, via the master unit, and store therein the data.
3. The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the remote center has a function of automatically transmitting the data to the master unit, and the control circuit makes the master unit to transfer the data automatically received from the remote center to the plurality of slave units.
4. The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the master unit has a printer, and the control circuit allows, only when the master unit makes the request, the printer to print the data received by and stored in the master unit.
5. The communication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the control circuit prohibits the printer from printing the data stored in the master unit when the control circuit detects authentication information set for the data stored.
6. The communication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the master unit has a display on which the data stored in the master unit is displayed and each one of the plurality of slave units has a display on which the data stored in each one of the plurality of slave units is displayed, and the control circuit allows the display of the master unit and the display of each one of the plurality of slave units to list thereon reception records associated with pieces of the data stored in the master unit and each one of the plurality of slave units, respectively, wherein each one of the reception records includes an indication as to whether an associated piece of the data has already been displayed.

7. The communication apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the communication apparatus further communicates with an external terminal, and when the external terminal designates one of the master unit and the plurality of slave units, the control circuit handles collectively, in response to a request from the external terminal, the pieces of the data stored in the designated unit by classifying the pieces of the data into already-displayed pieces and unread pieces.

8. A communication apparatus that communicates with a remote center to receive data from the remote center, the communication apparatus comprising:

a master unit that receives the data from the remote center;

a plurality of slave units that receive the data from the remote center, via the master unit; and

a control circuit that controls the master unit and the plurality of slave units, wherein when the master unit makes a request to the remote center for transmitting the data, the control circuit prohibits the plurality of slave units from receiving and storing therein the data transmitted from the remote center, and when one of the plurality of slave units makes the request, the control circuit prohibits the master unit from storing the data transmitted from the remote center and prohibits other ones of the plurality of slave units from receiving and storing therein the data transmitted from the remote center.

9. The communication apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the remote center has a function of automatically transmitting the data to the master unit, and the control circuit makes the master unit to transfer the data automatically received from the remote center to the plurality of slave units.

10. The communication apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the master unit has a printer, and the control circuit allows, only when the master unit is not prohibited from storing therein the data transmitted from the remote center, the printer to print the data received by and stored in the master unit.

11. The communication apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the control circuit prohibits the printer from printing the data stored in the master unit when the control circuit detects authentication information set for the data stored.

12. The communication apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the master unit has a display on which the data stored in the master unit is displayed and each one of the plurality of slave units has a display on which the data stored in each one of the plurality of slave units is displayed, and the control circuit allows the display of the master unit and the display of each one of the plurality of slave units to list thereon reception records associated

with pieces of the data stored in the master unit and each one of the plurality of slave units, respectively, wherein each one of the reception records includes an indication as to whether an associated piece of the data has already been displayed.

13. The communication apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the communication apparatus further communicates with an external terminal, and when the external terminal designates one of the master unit and the plurality of slave units, the control circuit handles collectively, in response to a request from the external terminal, the pieces of the data stored in the designated unit by classifying the pieces of the data into already-displayed pieces and unread pieces.

14. A communication apparatus that communicates with a remote center to receive data from the remote center and transfers the data to a plurality of slave units, the communication apparatus comprising:

a control circuit that controls the communication apparatus and the plurality of slave units, wherein when one of the communication apparatus and the plurality of slave units makes a request to the remote center for transmitting the data, only the one that makes the request is allowed to receive and store therein the data transmitted from the remote center.

15. The communication apparatus according to claim 14, wherein when the communication apparatus makes the request, the control circuit allows only the communication apparatus to receive the data transmitted from the remote center and store therein the received data, and when one of the plurality of slave units makes the request, the control circuit allows only the one of the plurality of slave units to receive the data transmitted from the remote center, via the communication apparatus, and store therein the received data.

16. The communication apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the remote center has a function of automatically transmitting the data to the communication apparatus, and the control circuit makes the communication apparatus transfer the data automatically received from the remote center to the plurality of slave units.

17. The communication apparatus according to claim 15 further comprising a printer, wherein the control circuit allows, only when the communication apparatus makes the request, the printer to print the data received by and stored in the communication apparatus.

18. The communication apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the control circuit prohibits the printer from printing the data stored in the communication apparatus when the control circuit detects authentication information set for the data stored.

19. The communication apparatus according to claim 18 further comprising a display on which the data stored in the communication apparatus is displayed, and wherein the control circuit allows the display to list thereon reception records associated with pieces of the data stored in the communication apparatus, and each one of the reception records includes an indication as to whether an associated piece of the data has already been displayed on the display.

20. The communication apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the communication apparatus further communicates with an external terminal, and handles collectively, in response to a request from the external terminal, the pieces of the data stored in the communication apparatus by classifying the pieces of the data into already-displayed pieces and unread pieces.

21. A communication apparatus that associates with a master unit that communicates with a remote center to receive data from the remote center, and the communication apparatus that receives the data from the master unit, the communication apparatus comprising:

a control circuit that controls the communication apparatus and the master unit, wherein when one of the communication apparatus and the master unit makes a request to the remote center for transmitting the data, only the one that makes the request is allowed to receive and store therein the data transmitted from the remote center.

22. The communication apparatus according to claim 21, wherein when the master unit makes the request, the control circuit allows only the master unit to receive the data transmitted from the remote center and store therein the data, and when the communication apparatus makes the request, the control circuit allows only the communication apparatus to receive the data transmitted from the remote center, via the master unit, and store therein the data.

23. The communication apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the remote center has a function of automatically transmitting the data to the master unit, and the control circuit makes the master unit transfer the data automatically received from the remote center to the communication apparatus.

24. The communication apparatus according to claim 22 further comprising a printer, wherein the control circuit allows, only when the communication apparatus makes the request, the printer to print the data received by and stored in the communication apparatus.

25. The communication apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the control circuit prohibits the printer from printing the data stored in the communication apparatus when the control circuit detects authentication information set for the data stored.

26. The communication apparatus according to claim 22 further comprising a display on which the data stored in the communication apparatus is displayed, wherein the control circuit allows the display to list thereon reception records associated with pieces of the data stored in the communication apparatus, each one of the reception records includes an indication as to whether an associated piece of the data has already been displayed on the display.

27. The communication apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the communication apparatus further communicates with an external terminal, and the control circuit handles collectively, in response to a request from the external terminal, the pieces of the data stored in the communication apparatus by classifying the pieces of the data into already-displayed pieces and unread pieces.